

British Naturalization Records

Becoming a naturalized citizen was occurring in England as early as the 1500s. Over time the process changed, and different records were kept. Many naturalization indexes exist and can be found online.

Objectives

At the end of this class, you will be able to:

1. Know what British naturalization records exist
2. Know how to access British naturalization records

What is British Naturalization?

- The process of becoming a British citizen and enjoying the same rights and privileges as though you were naturally born a British citizen.
- Difference between British subject and British citizen. A British subject lived in one of the many Commonwealth countries around the world but was not considered to be a British citizen like those naturally born in the British Isles.

Naturalization Acts affecting the naturalization process:

Before 1844:

- Denizations was granted by Parliament.
- Could not vote
- Could not hold land

1844

- Naturalizations recorded on close rolls.
- Naturalization by administrative grant at the Home Office.
- If naturalization was given became a British subject as though by birth.
- Had the right to hold any office except in Parliament.

1870

- Five years residence in the United Kingdom or service to the Crown.
- Children under 21 of a naturalized father (or widowed mother) were considered to be naturalized.

1949

- Each of the British Commonwealth member states would legislate for its own citizenship, distinct from the shared status of "Commonwealth citizen."

What British naturalization records exist and what information can you find in them?

- **Denization papers:**
 - Required a private act of Parliament. Before 1844, a single act recorded on parchment rolls which covered multiple individuals.
 - Information includes mostly just the name of an ancestor but may also include the name of spouse and children if included in the denization.
 - There are instances when the profession or names of parents and birthplace may also appear.

- **Naturalization case papers:** Forms filled out when applying for naturalization. These papers rarely survive if the person was not granted naturalization. These records are only available after 100 years. Information includes:
 - Nationality
 - Profession
 - Names and ages of spouse and children
 - Birth date
 - Birthplace
 - Address of the applicant
 - Character references
 - Police report after 1878
- **Naturalization certificates:** Issued for those who were granted British citizenship. Indexes to naturalization certificates are also available. Information includes:
 - Ancestor's full name
 - Residence/address of the applicant
 - Ancestor's birthplace
 - Age and date of birth
 - Parents' names
 - Name of spouse (if married)
 - Occupation
 - Children with their names and ages (if still of dependent age)
- **Renunciations:** Records of those who renounced their British citizenship.
 - Index from 1949-1982

How to access the British Naturalization Records

Information on British Naturalization records can be found on the nationalarchives.gov.uk website. There are some great websites for finding British naturalization records online.

Before 1800:

www.familysearch.org

- Denizations index and images and Naturalization indexes, 1509-1924
 - [1509-1700](#)
 - [1701-1914](#)
 - [1915-1924](#)

<https://archives.parliament.uk/>

- Denizations in the Parliamentary Papers
- [Before 1844](#)

<https://archive.org> – Internet Archive

- Denization index and images and Naturalization indexes, 1509-1800
 - [1509-1603](#)
 - [1603-1700](#)
 - [1701-1800](#)

1800s forward:

www.familysearch.org

- Denizations index and images and Naturalization indexes, 1509-1924
 - [1509-1700](#)
 - [1701-1914](#)
 - [1915-1924](#)

www.ancestry.com

- Naturalization indexes and certificates
 - [1870-1916](#)
- UK Alien Entry Books
 - [1794-1921](#)

nationalarchives.gov.uk

- Naturalization case papers, 1801-1996
 - [1801-1871](#)
 - [1872-1934](#)
 - [1934-1996](#)
- Naturalization certificates, 1870-1948
 - [1870-1916](#) (Certified copies)
 - [1913-1948](#)
 - [1949-1981](#)
- Renunciations
 - [1949-1982](#)

Steps to accessing the British Naturalization Records:

FamilySearch	National Archives	Ancestry	Parliamentary Archives	Internet Archives
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Log in to familysearch.org.2. Click Search, then Catalog.3. In the Place search type England, then Search.4. Click on "England Naturalization and citizenship - indexes."	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Go to the website and in the "Search our website" box type, British naturalization.2. Click on Naturalization, registration and British citizenship – The National Archives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Log in ancestry.com and then click Search.2. Click Card Catalog.3. In the Keyword(s) search type "UK, Naturalisation Certificates".	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. From the home page under Online Resources, click "Parliamentary Papers."2. Also, from the homepage try clicking on "Records Online," and then "Private Acts."	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Go to archive.org.2. Or Google: "Letters of Denizations Internet Archive."

Additional Information

To learn more about British Naturalization Records go to:

- The National Archives online at nationalarchives.uk. Type in "British Naturalisations" in the search box.
- Wiki.familysearch.org and in the search box type "England." Under the Record Types, click on "Naturalization and Citizenship."